

her having a training shall be registered. The opponents of the scheme say that you cannot register character, and that technical qualifications are of small importance compared with character. She did not at all agree with that view. If there was time, persons who wish to be supplied with a nurse should make inquiries as to her character before employing her, but that is quite impossible in cases of sudden emergency.

Registration should be in addition to, and not instead of, that inquiry.

Registration would increase the efficiency of nurses and would induce a better and more earnest class of women to become nurses, and not diminish the numbers at all. She did not think the money question would deter young women from going in for nursing. The expense would be such a small one that any woman who is at all earnest would make an effort to obtain the money, and she felt sure it would not deter her from registering.

With regard to uniformity, there are certain things in nursing which every nurse should know, and which are not taught in all training-schools, such as skill in attending the diseases of women, ophthalmia and fevers which scarcely go into general hospitals, and which should be included in one certificate of training.

Supposing a nurse got married, and her husband died after two or three years, she could be replaced on the Register, and she thought some system of post-graduate instruction in nursing might be adopted whereby nurses might keep up to their work. They might forget a few details, but they would not forget the general principles of the work if they had been once properly trained.

With reference to Miss Hobbs's idea that the Register could be revised each year she suggested that the nurse should each year produce testimonials, say, from registered medical practitioners. At least one testimonial should be from a doctor, and she thought that one from the nurse's employers would also be valuable. If she worked for a co-operation, the Matron or Superintendent of the institution would be the person to obtain a testimonial from.

If there were any suspicion of forgery, it should be quite possible for the Council to write to the person from whom the testimonial purported to come.

She thought that such a system would add greatly to the value of Registration, in that it would be a guarantee that the nurse was fit for her work within a year from the date of the certificate, so that it would preclude the necessity for inquiries by the public, and this would be a material advantage.

With reference to the Royal British Nurses' Association, the Association always required some certificate as to character and efficiency from those who applied to be enrolled on its list. They enrolled about 120 a year.

Miss Hobbs was asked if it were possible to supply the Committee with a balance-sheet of the Association, and she said she would do so.

She desired to emphasise the fact that under the present system the untrained women are on the same level as the trained. She was constantly hearing of women of no training at all who are successfully competing with them.

Registration would not enable a registered nurse to charge a higher fee, and the public, if it chose, could continue to employ untrained women.

State Registration would supersede the Royal British Nurses' Association, so far as Registration

was concerned. Miss Hobbs was sure that it would be impossible to register two classes of nurses. It would lead to the difficulty that inferior nurses would say they were registered, and then how would the public know there was a distinction?

At the present time, a woman can go into a small hospital and just wander through her term of training, and get her certificate without any education, discipline or study. If Registration were in force a woman would know that she would have to conform to its rules, and a frivolous nurse would not apply for training because she would not want to be under strict discipline.

She thought the training in any hospital of less than fifty beds was insufficient for a thorough training, and so small cottage hospitals, &c., would practically disappear as training-schools.

A great deal of knowledge had to be obtained to make the nurse utilise her experience in a hospital, and nurses ought to have that knowledge tested before they got their certificates.

Miss Hobbs was asked if, instead of registering the women, it would not be well that the Nursing Homes and institutions were registered, and they were made responsible for the training of the women they send out, and she replied that that would not touch the hundreds of women who are not connected with any institution at all.

It was a serious matter that at present to the general public the certificate of any hospital is of much the same value as that of another.

The hospitals should give nurses more opportunities to obtain information as to special subjects, such as ophthalmic nursing, &c., than they do now.

In a large co-operation it was often necessary to ask five or six nurses before finding one who had seen a certain type of case. That should not be, and would not be if there were any uniformity in the training.

So at the present time the three years' hospital training and certificate does not guarantee that the nurse knows as much as she ought.

The registering of Nursing Homes would be a great step in the right direction.

The witness thought that if a nurse ceased to practise for a year or two she might be removed from the Register, and if she was for some years out of work the only thing would be to have another examination to test her knowledge before placing her again on the Register.

At present, nurses seem to be confounded with housemaids and criminals, and if we had State Registration and some uniformity of education they would be recognised as skilled workers.

Nurses did not register in large numbers with her Association, but she did not think that it is the fee of one guinea for registration charged by the Association that prevents them from doing so. She felt sure that nurses would willingly pay three guineas for State Registration, where they would not give one guinea to a private society for a voluntary procedure.

She thought that an annual revision of the Register would employ several clerks, and that the money would come from the 2s. 6d. fee which she suggested the nurses should pay each year.

If a nurse was rather a stupid woman, inefficient and unzealous, and became inefficient, she would not be struck off the Register without any regard to criminality.

On Tuesday, July 26th, Miss Hobbs was recalled,

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